

An Oral History

with

Denise Catone

SSC History Project

Interviewer: Martin Oramous

2005

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This is an interview by the Stennis Space Center History Office. The purpose of this interview is to document the story of key personnel during/after Hurricane Katrina at SSC. The interview is with Denise Catone and is taking place on November 29, 2005. The interviewer is Martin Oramous. Also present are Paul Foerman and Shelia Reed.

DENISE CATONE: I'm Denise Catone. I'm the Executive Officer for the NASA Shared Services Center but pre-Katrina and through Katrina until about October I was the Office of Human of Capital Manager at the Stennis Space Center.

MARTIN ORAMOUS: Tell us your story. Your experience of living through Katrina, starting with maybe a few days before. Everybody was looking at that storm and hoping it wasn't going to come. Then, everybody realized it was. Now what do you do?

DENISE CATONE: What happened is on Friday we were asked to cover our computers and of course let down our blinds to cover the windows. We did that in a half-hearted measure because we figured that come Monday or Tuesday we would be back at work. Probably Tuesday, because we really didn't know when the storm was actually going to hit the Coast. We did our usual preparations and then we went home. I remember looking at my notes just recently from before Katrina and after Katrina and the things that we were working and how it all just didn't make any difference. It wasn't important at all come Monday afternoon. But, it is so ironic when you look back at those notes. When I look back at them, I thought this was such a different day from Friday when we left work. But, we did cover our computers and we left. At that time, the storm was still coming in through we thought around Pensacola. It was only around Saturday, when I think it started to take that more westerly approach but we still didn't evacuate. I live in Diamondhead, MS. I'm north of I-10. I'm in flood zone C. I don't have any flood insurance. I figured I was pretty safe. But by Saturday night we were keeping a watch on the T.V. Watching the weather because it had definitely taken a dramatic turn. Finally on Sunday morning we decided to act and to evacuate from Diamondhead, MS. We got in our car and we left about 11:00. We took I-10 East and we ran into the parking lot on the other side of Gulfport. It just came to a halt. We went, oh, I guess it took us 2 1/2 hours to go 30 miles and we decided to turn around and come back. We went back to our house. I didn't even think about sheltering here at Stennis Space Center because I thought we would be safe. I thought I would have wind damage. I wasn't worried about water at all. So we decided to just freeze as much ice as we could. We already had canned goods and we had our dogs with us. So, we setup a little room that had no windows and doors where we could go in case it got a little hairy but other than that we just sat around and waited and then at 5:30 Monday morning is when we lost electricity and cable. By then, we

knew it was headed directly for us. It looked like it was going up the Pearl River. I believe that is what they had said. The northeast quadrant was where Hancock County, it was like a bullet sitting right on us. I knew we were going to get clobbered but I thought we would still be O.K. and as it turned out we really were. I live in a pretty high elevation and so I did get some wind damage but the thing I noticed is that when the Hurricane started at 5:30 that morning, the first wave upon wave of wind coming through, they had told us it would be over by 1:30 that afternoon and it was still 5:00 or 6:00 in the afternoon before that storm finally abated. We thought it would never end. We had come out I guess it was when the eye passed over and it was a little calm. You could see people in the street had come out to sort of get an eye view of the damage at that point but the winds picked up again so everybody went back inside. Then around 5:30 or 6:00 we were able to go out and look at the damage and we were wandering around in dazes. You could see people had gotten out and walked just to see because the roads were covered in Diamondhead. There was no passable road anywhere. So you couldn't go anywhere except by foot. The electricity was still out but the winds had abated. It didn't seem to be that much rain but the wind damage was tremendous. I remember the thing that broke my heart the most at that time was I had a 100 year old oak tree and it was split in half. I loved that oak tree. That was one of the reasons we bought the house. I realized then even if we salvaged it, it would never be the same in my lifetime. We just had a few shingles, a little siding and so we were relatively well off when we looked at the other homes in our neighborhood. There were punctures in the roofs because the trees had fallen on them. There were trees falling everywhere. We had heard the snapping of the pines but I thought it was in the forest behind us. It was trees that were surrounding homes so the devastation was just beyond belief. I knew it would be a long time before we got electricity back because I had been through Hurricane George early on and that was Monday afternoon. On Tuesday, Dave Throckmorton who is the Deputy Center Director here at Stennis stopped by to see how we were and that was the first time we found out that I-10 was passable. We didn't realize that we could get back and forth to work and he said if I could come in, to come in because every hand was needed. There were people that were still sheltering at Stennis and they needed every employee who could come to work, to come to work. So, on Wednesday I reported to work in my shorts and T-shirt because that was what everybody else was wearing. People had evacuated to the shelter. They had taken about three days worth of clothes. It was casual clothing so we were all dressed the same. We were in shorts and T-shirts. People were going through maybe their second or third day and that is about all they had bought. We didn't have washers and dryers setup at the time. I remember it was so funny, this usually, normally, well dressed group of executives and senior managers and others sitting around for this meeting and then people had on T-shirts that had these funny sayings and some of them would raise their arms and they had holes in their T-shirts. It was kind of funny but it was poignant at the same time. These were people who were doing the best they could in a terrible situation. The other thing I remember about the EOC that was up and running was Don Griffith and Ron Magee had been there from the very beginning and they were absolutely dead on their feet. They were in this mist of people. They couldn't go anywhere without a whole crowd of people coming around and asking them all kinds of questions. Everything imaginable to about what was going to be served for dinner as to how can I get to see how my house is doing, all kinds of questions that they couldn't

possibly answer but they were the points of contact. That was the other thing that I remember. We couldn't get any information. We were totally isolated from the outside and that is a terrible feeling. We had no communications or the little communications we had were very rudimentary. The lack of information, being isolated like that is more terrible than the storm itself and that was the same thing in my neighborhood. Nobody knew anything. We had gone to the fire station. They didn't know anything. It was just amazing. I think it was Wednesday or Thursday when we got communications. They had setup a telephone line to Marshall and I remember it was so funny. You had to dial all these numbers just to get to Marshall and then you could get to your number. But it was a miracle and it was wonderful and for the first time we could talk to people from the outside ... *crying, tears fall*. How wonderful it was for them to know and to hear their voices. It was so wonderful. We also had air-conditioning. The air-conditioning came back and we had air-conditioning on the first and second floor and that was for the people who were sheltered there because as you walked down those hallways in B1100, they had them all on the 1st floor but every hallway was jammed packed full of people and belongings and you had the full range. Everything was in disarray to those who had really setup housekeeping. I mean they had their beds down and they were made. Somebody had found a little shelf and they had their little belongings upon the shelf on the 1st floor in a corridor heading toward the South. It was amazing but they were in good spirits and for what they were having to go through. It is like every time we would walk through any of us with badge, they had more questions and they would stop you. If you stopped to answer a question, I started writing down questions and tried to get answers back to them. That was one of the lessons learned that we had is that for each corridor we ought to assign a captain and if they would have a meeting with the people who were in that corridor and get their questions and they have daily meetings and come back with information. I think people were starving for it and if they had that it would have been wonderful. They finally got television cable and they setup two huge TVs which were also distracting but people could see that they were very fortunate to have been in this shelter as bad as things were to them. It was a huge disruption in their routine and they wanted to go back to their houses. They didn't know if their house still existed but by looking at the T.V. they had an inkling that things weren't going to be real good in some places. It is amazing. They tell you to prepare for the storm. Get your medications. Bring clothing. You can't bring animals to the shelter, all of this. We had people who didn't have their medications. Some people had come there and they had no clothing because again everybody assumed as in days past that we would be home the next or third day. We wouldn't be out as much as we were. We had people who brought pets to the shelter. They just couldn't leave their pets behinds. So some of them had them in cages and others of them were very small. I remember Bill Parsons telling us and Bill Parsons came in as head of Relief Operations for both Michoud and Stennis Space Center at that time. He said there was a lady in a wheelchair and she had a little dog nestled by her side and he said there was no way I was going to take that dog away from that lady because that was probably the one thing that was holding it all together for her. So you wouldn't do that and we understood. The other thing is we were sheltering about 40 plus special needs people. It is true. We are a shelter. It is a ride-out shelter. We're not setup like a Red Cross shelter but we had 40 special needs people who had come in, some of them with caregivers, others were not. They put them in a separate room. The other thing is our

cafeteria began serving meals. I think up to 9,000 meals a day. That was three times a day. Breakfast, lunch and dinner and it was a set menu. There was no ordering. You didn't get special orders. There was no steak and potatoes but it was good food and they were accustomed to serving for breakfast less than a 100 and for lunch about 200 and here they were serving 9,000 meals a day to this crew that was in the crew, the people who were sheltered there. All of us who were working. I mean it was a tremendous undertaking. Anita Douglas and Jeannie Frederick who were employees in my office. They were on that serving line. The other thing that Anita and Jeannie did, they were in the shelter and they rode out the storm. We heard that a tornado hit the North wing and tore off the roof. Rain started coming in the building. Well, the Human Resource's office is on the 1st floor. The rain continued to come down and Anita and Jeannie rounded up a couple of volunteers. They moved all of our official personnel files and all the training files out to a safer location where it was dry. They also put everything up in boxes that they could. They tried to move everything to the middle of the room where there wasn't any water. That was a heroic effort. They saved personnel files. It takes years sometimes to build these files back. So to me that was a wonderful thing that they did. I'm pretty sure that they are going to be rewarded for their efforts. Also, the people who volunteered and who worked with them to box all this stuff up and get it moved to safer location.

MARTIN ORAMOUS: What was the most urgent need as far as just having to do some matter of business at Stennis when you got here? After everything else and being settled in with the people who were being sheltered and you realized the different effort but then you have to go to work. What did you have to do?

DENISE CATONE: The biggest thing after we got there and started having the meetings was we were trying to find out where our workforce was. What their status was? Were they on site? Had they sheltered there or could we get hold of them and what their status was?

MARTIN ORAMOUS: How could you do that without communication? It seems like it is almost impossible.

DENISE CATONE: It's amazing how creative people can be when they are trying to communicate. We had people who had talked to other people. So you had word of mouth. Word of mouth became the way to communicate. We setup a Call Center on the 2nd floor because the North Wing Offices were out. We couldn't use the North Wing offices. So on the 2nd floor in a conference room with Applied Sciences. It was their conference room. They brought in computers and telephones. We by word of mouth started entering people's names and separating them by company. We would get a report every morning from Points of Contacts from each of the different organizations. We got this number out and I think the two were the Sun Herald, WLOX and I think we might have also gone into Louisiana to the one radio station I think that everybody was listening to but I can't remember what the name of that one was. WWL. That's right it was WWL. Those were primarily the three that we used to broadcast and we broadcasted our number. Please call and let us know where you are. So, we got a lot of calls. We had NASA employees actually call NASA watch. They were wanting to know what the status of the center was.

Laughter... I thought this was hilarious. Please get the word to my center that we are O.K. They called NASA Headquarters. They called other centers. They would funnel all this information apparently to Marshall who would funnel it to us. Finally when we had telephone communications with headquarters, we were getting an update from them. Finally, then when we had communications with everybody except poor Johnson had to also evacuate because of Rita. We were getting those numbers in and day by day that list grew. Of course I was primarily concern with the NASA employees. We had about 290, 300 out there. I remember in my notes, I think one of the 1st days it was 92 accounted for and how many of them were homeless? I think it was 22 at that time. But primarily that was the people who had called in or the people who were working and that's what we had. The other thing is we had wonderful employees. It was both Contractor, Civil Servants or NAVY. They went out to the different neighborhoods. I'm going out to Slidell. I'm going out to Long Beach. I'm going to Picayune. I'm going over to New Orleans and they would come back and we would give them a list of addresses and say please check out and see if you can find this person. They would go out and check if they could get to it and they would come back and report. We found probably between 20 and 30 people like that. Where they had gone out to the neighborhood and actually visited their home. Where there was no home, they would leave a note on the slab or whatever was standing at the time saying we are trying to reach you. There were so many ways that we got the information and slowly but surely for the NASA employees because ours was very small, about 290. We finally reached a point where we had contacted everybody and it was a relief that we had lost no employees because that is what everybody wanted to know. Had we lost any employees and that was center wide. I believe it was a Navy, NAVO, a father and his son were about the only fatalities. But, then I remember we had an employee, Gerry Meeks and his wife had elected to stay in her home in Waveland or Bay St. Louis, one of those cities. He couldn't locate her. I still don't know if he has located her or not. As the time wore on and we figured and he did too that she was probably lost. We thought it was a small miracle of the number who survived actually out of the total Stennis workforce. That is all of the contractors and all the other Federal Agencies. The lost was very small. So it goes to prove that all of these pre-preparations that they get out, somehow it gets in a little bit. A lot of people evacuated when they saw the severity of the storm and how massive it was. I would have evacuated if I could have but we just didn't get very far and we just turned around and came back. My house was intact and I've been able to use it to help other people. We've had people come down TDY and I've had people from Procurement for 30 days come and stay in my house. I had two people from Human Resources come in and stay in my house for about a week at a time. That's unusual. We tell people and they will say where am I going to stay because there is no hotels except in New Orleans. You offer your home. It just goes to show that people all pull together. It was very gracious of them to agree to come down here under those circumstances and even though we knew each other and we were friends, it's still strange to stay in someone else's house but that's one of the ways we have been able to get additional people in here to help. We did have people slowly but surely trickling in coming back to work. The main thing began to be we need to get the shelter people out because we need to get our offices back in order so that we can get back to work and our mission. That's another thing. We had wonderful people who were looking after our Test Stands, looking after IT communications. I mean it was Terry Bordelon. There was Kern

Witcher. There was Dale Sewell. These people were right there from the very beginning, from the get go keeping our facilities and keeping watch over them. It was just very heartwarming how seriously they took this task and how well they performed it.

MARTIN ORAMOUS: After you were finish with the job of locating everyone, what was the next order of business? Were you able then to more or less get back into what you ordinarily do because obviously nobody ordinarily is trying to locate people?

DENISE CATONE: The next order of business became what do we do with our workforce now that we have them. Number one: the North Wing offices were out of commission. Where were these people going to do a job even if we could get them back to the center? We had a variety of personnel authorities that were given to us in wavers. They were allowed time off, administrative leave; excused absence I believe is what they called it. So, if you couldn't get to work you were on excused absence because of the hurricane or if you could only get to work part-time because they were busy or maybe they couldn't even get to a road in order to get to work. So we had people on excused absence. What authorities did we have to try and grant all the leave and then what do we do for the people who weren't even around any more? We had so many people evacuate to Johnson, to Marshall to Kennedy? What do we do? What do we tell them? Do we tell them to come back? Well, if they don't have an office, they may have lost their home and may have lost their office as well. Double hit. So what we did is for people who evacuated we told them to stay put. We put people on temporary duty at these centers. They found temporary housing and just sort of settled in waiting for the word. Some of the other things we had to deal with were family members because they had evacuated but they couldn't maintain two households, a lot of these people. So we were putting their family also on administrative invitation order sub leave is what it was so that they were there and their families were there but we could get productive work out of them even though it was at another center. So they were either doing Stennis work at the other center or they were doing work for the other center depending on what their job was. We did talk to Jim Timwal, again another hero out of NASA Headquarters. He was great. We talked to him several times over the phone because we were exploring new ground. We had never had anything like this. We didn't even know, we couldn't anticipate what the questions might be and some of the questions that came in were just mind boggling. So we would parlay with Jim on a daily basis and we would talk about what we were going to do and how we are going to handle it and what the policy was going to be so that the Center Director when he issued it would not put the government in a comprising manner from which we couldn't back out. On the other hand, the Center Director had made it clear and also Bill Parsons that the people were the number one concern and they had so much to be concerned about. Some had lost everything. We had a range from people who had a slab all the way to people like me who had a few shingles and a few tiles and stuff like that. So, we were to treat everybody and be very sensitive about the situation. So, it was exploring the personnel authorities, getting the communications in. Everyday we got better with communications. I mean Terry Bordelon, the phones, getting fax capability. Just getting transmit capability. The Test Stands. Making sure that the lines because you can't... the way I understand it and I'm just a lay person at this, you've got to be careful with the things that contain the volatile liquid hydrogen, liquid oxygen that there is no air

that gets in there. So, they were taking care of that. They were going about their business. It was so funny. Somebody said I wonder when we are going to be able to test again. So, everyday got better and better until to where we got back, focused on the mission. Testing was really important maybe everybody just sort of looked at this person and said, hum, how can you be thinking of that? It goes to show that people started recovering fairly rapidly. I think the main thing is was when the electricity came back. It is almost like a switch and it was a switch. It was off and now it's on. When you have electricity where you can heat water and you can cook your own food and you can power the pumps to get gas in your car, it's just a wonderful thing. I remember seeing when we got light back in our neighborhood at night. All of us were standing out in the street and just looking. It is the little things. The little things. We were looking at the street lights marveling how much we had missed them? We had taken these things for granted. I think that's the thing... I had taken so much for granted. I did not appreciate... *tears, crying*, how good we have it and how wonderful people are and I do now but I was hoping I wouldn't lose that feeling but I know over time I will until something else reminds me of it. Everybody just pulled together and we helped each other.

MARTIN ORAMOUS: Everybody is still talking about it. What kind of things were put in place at Stennis to try and help people get through this? Were you involved in that at all or had experience with that?

DENISE CATONE: We have an Employee Assistance Program out here at Stennis and Porter Pryor is relatively new to the job. I don't think he had been on the job four months at that time. I remember that Porter was here from the beginning and he nearly dropped dead from exhaustion because he was here almost around the clock. It seemed like every time I turned around there he was and Porter was walking among the people in the shelter talking to people. Asking if there is someway he could help and trying to make lists. I remember Don Griffith had two people and one of them was Beanie Bell and she was in Finance and one of our engineers. They went out as a pair among the employees and asked them what they needed in order to evacuate the shelter. There were a couple of things. One was gas for the car and the other was getting their prescriptions filled. I know that on a couple of days there were runs made to the pharmacy to pick up medications where they could. Don Griffith started issuing little tickets so people could go over and get a tank full of gas because that's all people needed some times to leave the shelter. The other thing that Don did and Porter Pryor, I think they worked this together and also Legal, is we had these special needs people. We had about 40 of them and they were where the old Exchange Store used to be. We had to get them out because we weren't setup to take care of special needs and we had a couple of medical crews come in from Marshall but they were having to fly back home. They setup with Shreveport a facility that would take these special needs people. Don got the buses but in the meantime when we let these people know that they were either going to have to leave the shelter or we would put them on the bus to Shreveport it is amazing how quickly people started going home. I think it was just the uncertainty. Either they didn't want to go out and see the damage, they were delaying that as long as they could or they really didn't have any place to go. They didn't know what they were going to do once they got out there and they found they didn't have any shelter. Where do I go then? What do I do? At least here

I know I have a shelter. It's warm or it's cold and I've got food. I think they were reluctant to give that up but when we said we were going to start busing people to Shreveport then I think people started saying well, I'll check and see what's out there. Porter worked himself to the state of exhaustion trying to work the special request from people and we finally had to bring in someone from Marshall and I'm sorry I don't know her name but she was a wonderful replacement for Porter. We couldn't get Porter to leave. It was like Don Griffith and Ron Magee and Porter; we couldn't get them to leave and go home and take a break. They just felt like they couldn't. I can understand that once I came to work. Once I was here at work, I was here until way late because there was just so much to be done. We were it. We had setup the Call Center. The Call Center evolved into providing information to family members who called in because they hadn't heard from people. So it was a real relief. We got a lot of emotional phone calls. We were able to tell them that their family member was O.K. and their children were O.K. and they were fine and where they were. We had people cry over the phone. They were just so thankful for the information. So, that made us feel good. We had people come down from Marshall to spell us. They brought their own sleeping bags. They slept in those offices. That Phone Center was 24 hours in those early days and those phones were ringing 24 hours a day in the early days. So they did a tremendous job. It allowed me to go home to get some rest and then I would come in and spell them and then they would get some rest trying to sleep and re-coop. The phones were just ringing off the hook. Dave Throckmorton came and worked a session. We had other people who would come in because they had sheltered here and they were still here. So they would wander in from what they were doing. It was almost like coming to the Call Center was a break because it was chance to do something that made people feel really good when you couldn't control the other events. Maybe the electricity of the IT wasn't working as well as it could be. We were still wrestling with the shelter evacuees and we were also dealing with employees who had evacuated that were in their offices. As more and more people came back to work, we were having to move them from office to office and that wore awfully then. I remember Christine Reynolds and her husband Ben. Christine was pregnant. She had lost her apartment that she was living in while they were building a house which was very close to occupancy maybe two or three weeks and they lost that house as well. They lost everything and here she was, I think she was around six months pregnant at the time and she had two small children with her as well. Talking about somebody who had been moved from office to office because more people came back to work and they wanted to occupy their offices and finally she ended up in 1210 or we moved her to Marshall. We persuaded her to take a TDY assignment to Marshall because we really felt that she couldn't be stressed any further. She was the one that started the initial sheet identifying where employees were. She had setup that spreadsheet from which we built our others and her husband Ben, it's Powell I'm sorry not Reynolds. It's Christine and Ben Powell. Her husband Ben was the one who had gone with Beanie Bell down the different corridors to find out what people needed in order to leave the shelter and return home. Those were some of things that I remember. We also kept up the meals. The cafeteria remained open. I don't know when they finally went back to normal operations but it was well into October I think. Maybe end of September, October before they went back under normal operations. I remember a story about that because Anita and Jeannie were on the serving lines. We had people come through and they wanted to order a la carte. They

wanted steak or you don't have the jelly I need for my bread. I remember Anita saying she had never been so frustrated with people in her entire life. These were people who had a warm place and they had a meal that wasn't costing them anything and they were still complaining. We finally sent her home I think too because the stress I bet was getting to her. We had that many people together and all the demands that were coming on. It gets a little hard to be sensitive after a while.

MARTIN ORAMOUS: It sounds pretty amazing it went as well and as smoothly without incident as it did. It's now three months to the day since the storm hit. How would you describe the workforce now? Obviously, people are still talking about the storm. They are still suffering effects of everything they have been through. How are we doing as a workforce, the people that you deal with and know so well? Especially considering what they went through and what they are having to do now.

DENISE CATONE: I think we are still walking wounded. I think it is going to be that way for a long time. Hurricane season is still through the end of November and we keep wondering is there one more out there that's going to hit us. That's just when hurricane season is declared. We could get a hurricane any time. It's been warm. That's what made Katrina so huge is the Gulf was so warm. It doesn't seem like the cold weather gets here and stays any time. So every time it warms up we think is there another storm out there and they're into Gamma now. I think we're sitting on pins and needles wondering is the hurricane season going to end and if we are going to get clobbered again. I drive in and the debris is being removed. There are still some signs of it but I still see appliances on the roadway. I still see light poles that are down. You go to restaurants and there are limited menus. It's rough going into the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays and there are very few places to shop where you don't have to wait in long lines but people are so resilient and so giving. It's so difficult with such devastating losses. We still have people who haven't gotten trailers yet and I don't know where they are living. Maybe they are living in tents and it's getting colder waiting for insurance checks. The flood insurance program has run out of money. I think they are having to ask Congress for more of that. It seems like we might not see normal again as to what he had before in my lifetime. I don't think we'll ever get there in my lifetime. This people will remember. In New Orleans the hotels are opening up but they can't open up to full capacity because they can't get the workers that they need. We can't get our hotels to open because they are housing contractors, FEMA, and Red Cross workers. So they don't have any open local hotels. Apartments and houses are scarce. There is almost no place to go. All of our favorite restaurants are gone. When I think of all the wonderful restaurants in New Orleans that are gone. The Wal-marts. I think the Wal-mart in Waveland is open but still limited operations. The workforce has come back to work and that's been a Savior for a lot of people. That is to be able to come back to work and concentrate. I know it has been for me. I changed jobs. I took a job as the Executive Officer for the NASA Shared Services Center because they finally made a commitment. The contract had just been awarded on that center. They were starting up Operations and Operational Readiness Reviews when the hurricane hit. We lost our space that was here in this building because the North Wing was destroyed so those people moved into that space. So we relocated the project offices back to Washington, D.C. but Rick Arbuthnot, the Executive Director

came down here and he met with Governor Barbour and others of the Mississippi and Louisiana delegations and they committed that they would follow through with their promises to the NSSC. So the decision was made by the Administrator that the NASA Shared Services Center would remain at Stennis Space Center. We've got temporary facilities now in B5100 which housed FEMA workers and was relatively undamaged. So that's coming back up and we are committed to making NSSC operational March, 2006.

They have had some tests since then, the first test. It was such a joy to hear that rumble and that roar and I think people just sort of stopped. We are testing again. We are back on-line with that. It's just getting the rest of it. The work is coming together. It is getting our lives back in order. I miss being able to go to the mall. I miss being able to go out to the restaurant. I have to think every time how long is it going to take me to get there? Do I really want to go through that? That restaurant doesn't exist anymore. Where are we going? Things are opening in bits and pieces. The other thing is trying to convince people to come here to work. We're having to counteract what the media is projecting which shows of course all the worst devastation because that's where the story is. So we had to convince them to come down on TDY. Let us show you the area and when they come down the devastation is a bit much for them as well but they are amazed at the areas, primarily north of I-10 that survived, is in pretty good shape and where the infrastructure still remains. Mardi Gras is coming. So, we are going to have a Mardi Gras season. It may be short but we will still have that. I think that will bring more business. We miss New Orleans too. We want the old New Orleans. I know we won't have the old New Orleans back but we want New Orleans back and the culture and everything that it has with it. We want the bridges back. The Bay St. Louis Bridge, the Ocean Springs, Biloxi Bridge. It would be nice to have roads again. Highway 90 is coming back up as well. So, once we're able to move about more freely and more of the restaurants start opening and we have more of that infrastructure, then I think we can sort of breathe a sigh of relief. I think people are still edgy.

MARTIN ORAMOUS: All those things we have taken so much for granted, just like electricity. When they're gone you don't know how much you can miss them until then.

DENISE CATONE: That's the truth.

(End of Interview)